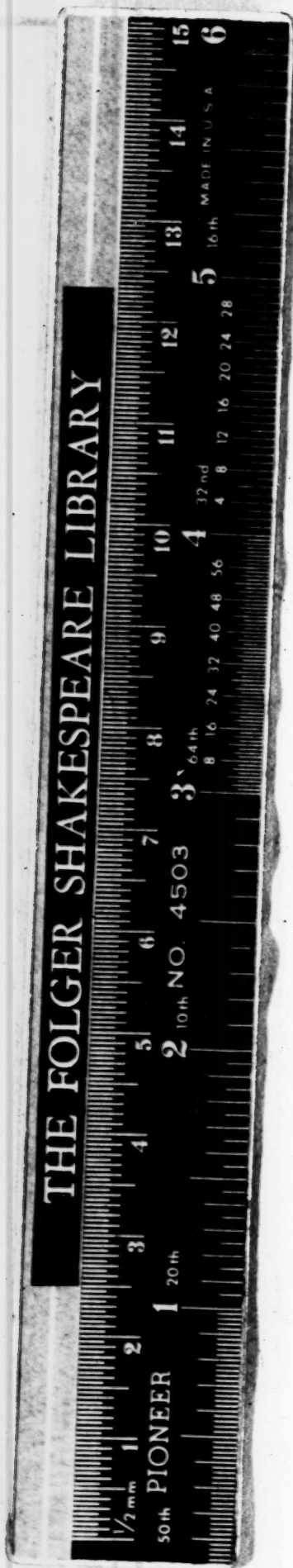


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SAINT  
PAVLS R V L E  
FOR RELIGIOVS  
PERFORMANCES.

A Sermon preached *May 15. Anno Domini 1631.*

By *Henry Paynter* B. D. Preacher of Gods Word  
in the City of EXETER.

*Rom. 14. 16.* Let not then your good be evill spoken of.

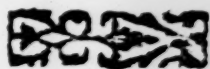
*Eph. 6. 1.* Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

*Tit. 2. 8. 9, 10.* That he that is of the contrary part, may be ashamed, having no evill thing to say of you: Exhort servants to be obedient to their owne masters, and to please them wel in all things, not answering againe, not purloyn-  
ning, but shewing all fidelity, that they may adorne the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

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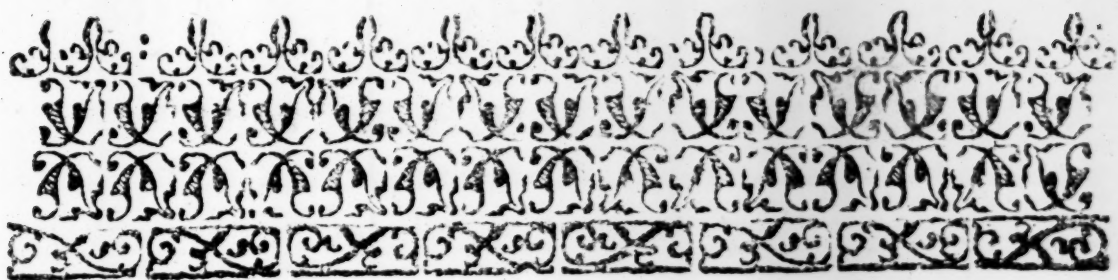
Basil. Epist. 76.

*Absurditas rei de qua scribo, animum quidem meum mæstitia replevit, propterea quod omnino in suspicionem abiit, & rumore percrebuit, hætenus tamen mihi incerta visa. Quod igitur de illa scribo, medicina loco sit, si quisquam sibi male conscius est. Qui sibi vero nihil huius est conscius, ei sit (ὡς προειρηται) vice præmunitionis ut id mali præcaveat. Si quis autem hanc rem susque deque fert (id quod in vobis deprehendi nolim) illi sit (ὡς διαμαρτυριαν) pro contestatione.*



LONDON,  
Printed by *I. B.* for *Nathaniel Butter.* 1632.





To my very VVorshipfull and  
*Christian Auditors.*



oe I appeale, for the evidences of my sincerest instructions and unpartiall endeavours in this Sermon to prevent such inconveniences as were iustly feared, but by vigilancy of authority and efficacy of Gods truth and ordinance apparantly prevented.

Who so fit as those who yeelded me their presence and patientiesses to assist me in giving up this account, being required, and now out of my power to be healed (having past as I understand) the hands and allowance of the examiner. Far was it from my purpose when I preached it, to do what now is thought fit to be done without me: Onely we may adde our testimony that this is the same, and all that was delivered upon that necessary occasion, whereby it may appeare how small their understanding and charity is, that so rashly censured it, or those whom it concerned. Giving of preservatives may import danger of infection, but not that all that take them are infected, or that prescribe them iniurions. Yet a foolish calumniation fall backe upon its



headlong voucher by discovery of truth, and he had his punishment in his bosome before his mouth was open. They are happy that need so little feare traducers, whiles their consciences pleade for them before God, their actions before men; the worst people will cry, Ad leones with others; and fooles will at least be meddling, and iudge cause and person before they understand. Were authority so iealous, as ignorance is censorious, some would be more silent for their owne ease: others against their wills, whom we would be glad to heare speake. Best is; none but a sycophant or man-pleaser, could censure the delivering of these few rules and cautions so needfull here, as since they have appeared to be. At least we know what can comfort us with Paul, 2. Cor. 1. 12. and shall, I trust, wait the better on all Gods ordinances, with more wisdom, and never the lesse zeale, for that it is more according to knowledge. In Eccl. 5. and the first seven verses the Preacher sheweth what abundance of folly, vanity, rashnes, error, sinne, danger, and repentance often accompanieth divine services in publike and private, for the prevention whereof I wish we could better distinguish betwene holy zeale and headlong performance. There is great ods betweene knowledge of the necessity of a duty, and ability to performe it in a due way and manner. I know not what hath lately more gravel'd and amazed me, then some Novices new boasts of such sudden sprouting of grace in these latter and colder times, unto that height of abilities, which hath not beene knowne in purest times under powerfulllest meanes, amongst eminent and famous Christians, but with long time and much experience. We are bound ever to acknowledge and blesse God for the glorious successe of the Gospel even now in this Kingdom, yet expect we no miraculous effects of it, as in the Primitive Churches,

Churches, which, enjoying them, yet needed to be regulated in the use of them, because sometimes it was not decent and orderly: and if in the publike, how much more in the private, where there is none to order the rest, or that can well iudge wherein the decency of such performances consists; but ignerance and affection must sway and censure al. And it is no small comfort to us in this place, nor slender gagge to licentious tongues abroad, that the severall lights (among which this is one of the least and obscurest) held forth in one day by so many able and well agreeing guides, was not without that successe, which hath since caused much thanksgiving to God by many of those that they were reached unto, among the rest, who being more wise and humble, & having more godly knowledge and experience then some other, perceived some failings & inconveniences which they were not aware of, nor could so well be discovered without some help. If others see not the generall use of these insuing directions, it will be their advantage not much to trouble their thoughts about it; leaving those, whom it concernes, to enjoy their benefit, and to give testimony to what they heard, who can and will rightly interpret it, and these few lines by sudden accident (to supply a defect, and prevent an inconvenience) hastily written to be prefixed, Dec. 17. Anno Domini 1631.

### Errata.

In Epist. lin. 4. read intention in Epist. l. 13. r. patience, in Epist. l. 14. for healed r. recalled. in Epist. l. 21. r. Giving.  
 Page 7 line 13. read done in, page 9. l. 2. read  $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ , p. 11. l. 24. r. see, looke, p. 19. l. 8. r. my thought, p. 20. l. 20. r. better preparation by examination, p. 21. l. 30. r. doe in; p. 24. l. 21. r. your acceptance, p. 28. marg. r.  $\sigma\upsilon\delta\alpha\lambda\alpha\omega\tau\epsilon$ , p. 29, marg.  $\sigma\upsilon\delta\alpha\lambda\omega\tau\epsilon$ , p. 38. l. 17. r. iudge of. Ibid. l. 24. r. or upon, p. 40. l. 17. r. decryed.







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SAINT  
PAULS R V L E  
FOR RELIGIOUS  
PERFORMANCES.

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1<sup>st</sup> Corinth. 14.40.

*Let all things be done decently and in order.*



The Church of Corinth first gathered and established by Saint Pauls ministry, was in a short time a very famous and flourishing Church in respect of all gifts necessary for constitution, edification or beauty of a Church. It was in its infancy perfect in all its parts, belonging to doctrine, discipline, ornament: But in the Apostles absence

B sence

sence degenerated and grew crooked through ill handling by unnaturall nurces, that sought onely themselves: using their gifts and employing themselves, in the Churches businesse, partially, ambitiously, covetously. *φιλαυτία* and *φιλαργυρία* were two great diseases, their teachers were very dangerously sicke of: which could not possibly stand with the good constitution and health of the Church that was yet but tender, and wanted strength to expell the malignity of these distempers which they had suck't in with their milke. Vaine affectation of popular applause carrying such selfe-conceited orators not onely to that selfe-disturbing passion of envious emulation, to have their gifts as much extolled and preferred above other sincerer preachers by the people, as boasted of by themselves, for their strange curiosities quaint elegancies and philosophicall conceits without the solidity of wholesome doctrine: but also to that base practise of detraction, and uncharitable calumniation, casting out unworthy aspersions against the Apostle, who desired to know (that is to crake and make shew of knowing) nothing but Christ Iesus and him crucified: disgracing his gifts and vilifying his ministry and preaching, as weake and contemptible; having nothing in it worth the Churches notice or acceptance.

This they did only to aduance themselves: they alone must carry the bell; as we see in *Diotrephes* one of these their swelling teachers, whose aspiring after a first-hood, and chiefly in the affections of the people was not without sundry indignities, offered to others better deserving; setting up his owne reputation



tion by the prejudice of the faithfull servants of Ie-  
sus Christ, against whom he was full of prating and  
malicious words, yea diabolicall imputations ten-  
ding to deepest mischief, This was one of their dis-  
eases which they were voluntarily sicke of and nou-  
rished (as countetfeit rogues some artificially made  
or continued malady) for their covetous ends, know-  
ing the more they could get to be esteemed of the  
people, the more they should drawe from them: and  
therefore laboured with a perpetuall iealousie of  
their owne credit, and despightfull behaviour a-  
gainst others, whose faithfull endeavours they  
thought might becloude it, and so hinder their pro-  
fit. Therefore they strived to blindfold, yea to stupi-  
fie the people while they tooke their peny-worthes  
out of them, bringing them into bondage, devouring,  
taking, exalting themselves, as the Apostle in a sa-  
cred and most savory sarcasme detecteth, and unmas-  
keth them. 2 Cor. 11. 20.

ἡρώδης βασι-  
λεὺς ἰουδαίας  
Mercurius  
discipulus, who  
was there-  
fore called  
Κεφαλαῖος & ἡδός,  
because he  
made his of-  
fice and elo-  
quence serve  
his covetous-  
nelle: and  
therefore (as  
Ἰσίδωρος βασιλεὺς  
ill. marsum  
tribuant &  
presidem (i.e.  
tuant sermo-  
num & merci-  
monium.

Hence grew the distemper of that whole Church,  
not onely causing deformity but danger, in two epi-  
demicall evils, faction and prophanenesse among  
the people. On the one hand divisions and sides, as if  
Christ himselfe were divided: On the other pro-  
phanenesse and licentiousnesse of life, as if they  
would crucifie him againe. And so that Church  
(though fundamentally sound and orthodoxe) wan-  
ted 2. things which were needful her to πρέπον & her  
εὐταξίαν, both decorum and order. Insomuch that  
even in the publike ministration there was a scanda-  
lous unseemelineffe, and Church-ruining disorder,  
as appeares in this and some of the precedent chap-

1 Cor. 1.  
2 Cor. 12. 20,  
21.

*Saint PAVLS rule for*

ters. Against these two intolerable evils, hee constitutes this law, rule or canon, as an Idea or platform according to which all their performances must be fashioned. It is the mould in which all they teach and doe must be cast, that it may beare this double stampe or impresse of *Decencie and Order*, which must give a commendable and gracefull luster to every ordinance, every action, all their behaviour, even unto gestures and rituall observations, especially in publike, (as hee had shewed before) and if there be any other particular not expressely mentioned, about the administration of holy things, (as indeed there were some) in the congregation, and Christian meetings, and duty of Gods worship and service tending to the profession and practise of religion, that God may be glorified, the Church edified, aliens allured or convinced, the mouth of inquiry stopped, the face of Christianity become amiable; and the power of the Gospel the better evidenced, he windeth it all into this *Coronis*, or gnomicall injunction: *Let all things be done decently and in order.* For this is the externall beauty of the Spouse of Christ on earth, not onely that she is compleate and not defective in essentials, but comely and amiable in all particulars for forme and order.

Occasion might be here taken for more varietie of observation and doctrine, then a sermon or two can beare the prosecution and application of. I desire onely by your patience, which I must intreate, some time more then ordinary, for the dispatch of this one conclusion which I lay downe plainly thus.

1 Cor. 11.  
4, &c.  
Rev. 334.



## Religious Performances.

3

*In the businesse of Religion and all holy and gracious performances about the same, not onely the goodnesse of the matter and substance of the act or duty, but duenesse of the forme and manner is necessarily required: This point I thinke fit to explaine, and therein the three tearmes of the matter, forme, and necessity: and then apply it.*

1. First the matter, the duty it selfe and substance of the action must be good and warranted by the word. *He hath shewed thee oh man what is good, and (that is) what the Lord doth require of thee:* Mich. 6. 3. and therefore the Apostle saith, *The Law is holy, and the Commandement* Rom. 7, 12. *holy iust and good:* not onely in it selfe, but to the observers to whom it is revealed and given to be done: such are all duties of piety and religion: Gods ordinances, and duties of his holy worship inioyned, with love, iustice, mercy, truth, peace, &c. that which is prescribed of God, not humane inventions, will worship, or things forbidden by the word, needlesse and superfluous traditions of which the Church was in a few ages too full: these are not intended to be done at all, but all the duties of holinesse (which we are especially by the holy Ghost in this place directed to consider of and set right in performance) all such things are simply to be allowed and done, being warranted and commanded in the Scriptures.

2. For the second: by *forme*, I doe not intend the internall and essentiall forme, sinceritie, faith, affection to the will of God, when a duty is performed out of true conscionable desire to obey & please God, without which a worke is a dead worke, destitute of spirit and life.

But I meane the externall forme, the manner and

due carriage of every action in wisdom according to circumstance; and this outward forme or manner of performance in all good duties hath two principall affections or properties, that may no more be slighted or neglected, then the good worke ought to be marred and defaced, *Scilicet, Decency and Order.*

De hoc loquitur  
terrogetur ex-  
terior conver-  
satio: non quod  
ex ea honestum  
proleat, Sed  
per eam. Bern.  
in Cant. Ser.  
88.  
I. c. 1. 1. 1.  
(Decorus)  
meus ingenu-  
itas sollicita  
seruare. cum  
conscientia bo-  
na, sine inte-  
gritatem, vel  
iuxta Aposto-  
liam procedere  
debet, non tam-  
en coram Deo  
sed etiam cora-  
m omnibus.  
Idem ibidem  
1. Cor. 11. 13.

*Seet. 1. Εὐχρηστία* decently, honestly, and in a seemely manner, it must be performed. So much is required in all our conversation, *Rom. 13. 13.* that it blush not to be seene abroad in the day for want of seemely attire and ornaments requisite according to the stte and quality of euery busines and godly action, least being not invested with comely habit, and graced by due comportment, it seeme ridiculous, offensive, or loathsome to any.

Therefore *κοσμησθῆναι* is comelineffe which adorne an uncomely thing, as the Apostle, speaking of uncomely parts, saith they are beautified by comely garments and ornaments upon them to set them forth. And his using a word of that nature in this place, is to imply, that our best and most necessary actions, even in and about the worship of God (which proceeding from us, have too much crookednesse, too many defects, when they are performed at the best) ought to be invested with the most seemely ornaments of circumstance in the manner, that may gracefully adorne them, as when there is due obseruation, of time, place, person, sexe, condition, gifts, abilities, and the like. This is decently.

Præter ordinem  
et seriem reris  
agit, quando

*Seet. 2. καλὴ τῆν* According to due order: that nothing be done confusedly, according to every rash-braine,



braine, tumultuarily, huddlingly; which who ever doth, breakes the rankes of persons, ordinances, and things in the Church (which is and ought to be, as a well set army with banners) and brings into it (what in him lyeth) such an *ἀνατάξις*, and hurly-burly, as would mingle all things confusedly, and give great advantage to the enemy. And this hath ever beene Satans aime, and one of his greatest stratagems, to subuert order which God hath stablished, and by confusion to breake in with his forces, and play the *Ἀπολλύων*, by dissolving order to worke destruction. Therefore there must be wisdom to set good duties in their places, and make them come to be due in their courses and turnes, like the standing and service of the priests and Levites in their severall orders and courses; some in the highest, some in the next, some in inferiour place.

*que prima sunt  
secundo quis  
aut tertio loco  
collocare sat  
est: & que in  
tertium locum  
subordinata  
sunt, principi-  
um putat. Bas.  
ser. de Bapt.  
iscretio quip-  
pe omnium virtutis  
ordinem ponit,  
ordo modum  
tribuit & de-  
corum, etiam  
& perpetua  
tem. - tolle  
hanc, & vir-  
tutem vitium,  
&c. Ber. in  
Cant, ser 50.*

By the word *Order*, therefore, he points backe to his former doctrines and reprehensions: for that Church was almost quite unjoynted through preposterous zeale, and Church-destroying confusion growing apace upon them, so that hee was faine to cry for order againe almost in every thing.

1. Touching the state of sexes, in a sort more then disturbed, if not turned upside-downe: wo-

*1 Cor. c. 11.  
& 14.  
He doth not  
here meane  
the husband  
and the wife  
in peccall,  
but the sexes,  
man and wo-  
man, general-  
ly.*

men not keeping their station in a decorum becoming their sexe, to give the prerogative to the man who was first created, of whom and for whom the woman was, and who is her head: That the woman should not usurpe above that the sexe was created for; not arrogating, but yeelding

the headship and prerogative to the man, especially in divine services and holy duties. Authority, eminency, superiority, in all actions, especially of sacred ioynt devotions, being challenged to the man.

*Testimur in ve-  
rum semper cu  
pimusque nega  
ta.*

There was a certaine petulancy of forward behaviour appearing in the weaker vessell (which that sexe is by a peculiar corruption apt to discover) crossing and inclining to breake the pale of restraining, and inclosing subiection, especially in things of most devotion, wherein I verily thinke that sexe doth generally excell the other, about pious actions, and duties of Gods worship; perhaps, being more sensible of their owne imbecillity and weaknesse, therefore more zealously and heartily desirous to shrowd themselves under the shadow of the Almighty, and to be much and often under his wing. But I say they favoured themselves in too much boldnes, passing bounds, affecting, glorying in their knowledge, devotion, forwardnesse, to the preiudice of the sovereignty and royalty of the man. This disorder he much calls vpon them to reforme.

*Cap. 11. 17, 18,  
19, 20.*

*Cor. 1. 10.  
11, 12.*

2. About the Supper, it was taken and vsed very disorderly, so that they came together not for the better, but for the worse. Religion and devotion was preiudiced by it: and schismes, and sects, and divisions increased generally: and in this particular, the disorder was so great, that they divided themselves one from another in the very *omnis*, ioynt meeting, and most united action of the Church. Other things were out of frame, and needed settlement (we know not how many) but this was the greatest and most intolerable, as that which after a sort overthrew and made



made a nullity of the Sacrament. *This was not to eat* Ver. 20.  
*the Lords Supper.* 3. In the use of those *καρσματα*, ex-

cellent (though common) gifts of the holy Ghost,  
then abundantly powred upon the Church, as was  
foreshewed. In the exercise of these he requireth  
Order in the Church as in a naturall body: every  
member in it's place. Not the care where the eye  
should be, nor the foot take the function of the hand:

1 Cor. 11. 1,  
&c. 21, 25.

but every one to it's proper use, office, operation, fa-  
culty. Neither should they be set one against ano-  
ther. *There should be no schisme in the body.* 4. That best

gifts be zealously affected, not onely among those  
that we now speake of, but chiefly among those  
gifts that accompany salvation, by which the other

123. *cap.*  
Col. 12.  
Cap. 12. ult.

are sanctified: and having promised to shew them a  
more excellent way, and that *ex abundanti* (over and  
above what he had before done) by plainer instance

and illustration, how their gifts may be guided in a  
most orderly manner for the best good and with most  
peace, he proceedeth unto it in the following chap-

ter throughout, where he teacheth them that chari-  
ty is most earnestly to be coveted, as inclining men  
to the due and diligent use of all their abilities with-

*Sponsa sine du-  
bio intellexerat:  
in omnibus que  
viderat, emine-  
re & praecele-  
re charitatis, & i-  
tiam, &c. Ideo  
deposuit ut or-  
dinem eius dif-  
ferat, ne forte a-  
liquid inordi-  
natur faciens  
vulnus ab ea  
aliquid accipi-  
at. Hic in  
Cant.*

out enuy and selfe-love, (the great disturbers of Or-  
der) to the best advantage of the Church. Know-  
ledge and faith, and hope are excellent: but in see-

king these, one may seeke himsele; But charity  
is not all for her owne profit, but seekes the profit of  
many that they may be saved, and goes abroad, and

putteth forth all the gifts and graces of Gods Spirit  
to worke, for the common benefit: And doth not say,  
shall I not take utmost liberty to increase mine owne

C

know-

knowledge and faith, and comfort, and felicity? for such a speech without limitation, though full of zeale, may be as full (and indeed it favors strongly) of selfe-love, that knowes, endures no order; charity is not in that manner emulous, no not of grace. The Apostle tels them charity is not so disorderly to seek her owne so, to know alone, to beleeve alone, to rejoyce in the truth alone, but with others, as the Church and people of God may injoy the same comforts and benefits together, with ones selfe: takes along the edification, comfort, peace, liberty, and good of the generall, with ones owne: yea prefers it. Therefore that is first in order, and greatest. Where it so rules not, there is no keeping ranke, the army is disordered, and confusion found in the chiefe parts; selfe-love turnes captaine (an usurping treacherous one) and lets in the enemy upon the maine, and body of the Church, for personall respects. Therefore having set charity on worke, and given her the command as generall, hee goeth on still prescribing order, and laying the rules to preserve it: first charity, then the best other spirituall gifts, chiefly prophesie: for greater is he that doth prophecy: then he marshalls other *χαρις κατὰ* in their places, and maketh canons for the use and orderly performance of all things of this kinde, as appears in this last, which includes all, with a binding imperative, which hath relation to the manner, let all things be so done: that *decorum* and order be duely observed. Therefore I would not touch this second point briefly, being the principall thing intended, that all might see (that would) it is not enough to say, should not Christi-  
ans

1 Cor. 13. 4.  
i. 2. 1. 1. 1.

2. 1. 1. 1. 1.  
1. 1. 1. 1. 1.

1. 1. 1. 1. 1.  
1. 1. 1. 1. 1.

1. 1. 1. 1. 1.



ans exercise their gifts? ought not all Gods ordinances to be used? Is not such a duty lawfull, yea necessary and commanded, and therefore to be done? yes, but with a proviso, if decently and in order. I have also produced the Apostles owne series, a large *replex* of 4. chapters, lest ignorance should thinke headlong performances grounded on better authority, then order can shew for it selfe (for ignorance and my selfe are well enough agreed to account mine owne iudgement nothing) though order it selfe, if it could but once get a good opinion in the minde, and an vnpartiall aspect or observation, would make maiestie it selfe amazed, and ravish the heart of him that had seene heaven, the greatest Apostle that ever was; the Order of Christians in the profession and practise of religion made the very heart of such a beholder, even to leape within him for ioy. *Col. 2. 5.* this was the second thing, the right manner.

*Seet. 3.* I shall need to stand the lesse upon the third particular, *The necessity* thereof. The Scripture sufficiently shewes this, in laying downe a Christian mans duty every where, and in all the parts, in adverbs, importing the manner of doing, not onely in generall; so looke to it, take heed that ye walke accurately, exactly for the manner; but in speciall, not onely that which is pious, iust, and (for the matter) necessary, is to be embraced: but all must be done *piously, righteously, soberly*: that is, in such a manner as duties of sobriety, iustice and piety, ought to be done in respect of the property and nature of the worke, and needfull circumstances thereunto belonging. We may instance in one or two duties, and these of piety.

*1 Kin. 10. 5.*  
Salomons  
greatest ma-  
iestie seemed  
to consist in  
order of his  
actions, at-  
tendance, go-  
vernment,  
&c. which the  
Queen of the  
South behol-  
ding had no  
spirit left in  
her.  
*Eph. 5. 15.*  
*Hæc tria serpe-*  
*tuo m. d. are*  
*a tu rbia Pau.*  
*li. Hæc tria*  
*serpente re-*  
*gula certa*  
*sue.*

*Tu 2. 15.*

1. The handling of the word it must be in a lawfull calling thereunto, reverently, soundly, conscionably, to Gods honour and our brethrens edification, so as men may perceive they have Gods Oracles in handling.

2. Prayer, how strictly are we to look to the whole man, even outward carriage as well as the state of the heart, and matter of the petitions we aske of God; lest wee offer the sacrifice of fooles, make God angry through our rashnesse, powre out prayers to be repented of, and dishonour God by taking his name in vaine, pharisaicall ostentation, uncharitablenesse, hypocrisie, &c. and who knoweth not that this is the chiefest part of a Christians cunning, and his best skill in the performance of what God hath commanded, and his owne heart intendeth to serve him in, that it be so done *as he may serve him acceptably, learning and receivng of Gods ministers* (not onely in what particular wayes, but) *how he ought to walke with God in all pleasing.* And had I not beene too large already in the confirmation and explanation of the conclusion, I would shew you further grounds, of no little consequence, nay of so much weight at least, as all our religion is worth for the due manner of performance. For it is so necessary, that many Christian vertues should want their exercise, and so God (that gives them) his honour without it; the prevention of many evils depends upon it; By it the glory of God is more advanced then by the duty it selfe, which it were not hard for an hypocrite to doe, without the due manner, and so by consequence can have no such comfort by doing, as by doing well. For this

Pet. 4. 12.

Lev. 1. 1, &amp;c.

Mat. 6. 5, &amp;c.

Hebr. 12. 28.

1 Thel. 5. 17.

Reasons.



leaveth not place for such apparant signes of pride and hypocrisie (the occasion whereof, worldlings take to traduce religion) and the iealous thoughts thence arising worke much wo and perplexity to many a sincere (though too ignorant and rash) soule; It maketh good provision for the peace of the Church, the manifesting of love, and inkindling of it towards us, and religion too in others, when it presents it selfe like *Hester* in it's ornaments; takes away the appearance and foment of arrogancy, emulation, envy: evidencing mortification, meeknesse, modestie, humility, obedience to lawfull authority: and prevents coofusion, distraction, inordinatenesse and insolencie, contention, discouragement of others, iealousies, evill surmises, contempt, and sleighting of religion, by such as are not yet inamored with the comelineffe and order of spirituall conuersation: I say all these things shew that there are many things considerable, observeable, in these holy performances; touching the right forme and gracefull manner of proceeding in them: And that it is not enough, the duties be good and holy, and necessary, tending to our own edification and comfort; but that we goe duely about them with much care and wisdom, and circumspection according to decorum and order.

Before we apply this to our selves, the scope of the words and intention of the holy Ghost in them calleth us (at least in a word) to shew the false use that the Church of Rome maketh of this most wholesome and Apostolicall Canon, wanting not

de ma. de Sa.  
 x. lib. 2. cap.  
 11. de modo  
 raris n. e. e.  
 ceremonie  
 q. uat. h. o. n. s. e.  
 i. u. n. e. d. o. c.

Ration. Divin.  
 offic.

Ordo est pari-  
 um disparium-  
 que sua cuique  
 loca tribuens,  
 dispositio. De  
 Civitat. Dei.

Adeo ut tole-  
 rabilior est lu-  
 deorum quam  
 Christianorum  
 conditio. Aug.  
 ad Epist.

an *Eckius*, a Pharisaicall ceremony-monger, or red-  
 cap: Romanist, to wrest the meaning of this Scrip-  
 ture to their owne sense: as if he meant here to lay a  
 foundation for Antichrist, to build all the stubble of  
 unprofitable and superstitious ceremonies upon, that  
 should afterward be invented, and foisted into the  
 Church, and forced upon the consciences of Gods  
 people as divine, under the pretence of decency, and  
 order. The Apostle speakes chiefly of necessary and  
 profitable ordinances, with that decency and order  
 in setting them forth, which tendeth to edification,  
 and must not be corrupted, perverted, adulterated,  
 abused and multiplied *in infinitum*, according to  
 mens fantasies and humours, to the dishonour of  
 God, and trouble of the Church, whereof these ma-  
 sters of mischievous ceremonies (such as *Durandus*)  
 are damnably guilty, obscuring the splendour and  
 beauteous luster of Gods ordinances, and thrusting  
 many of them out of their order and ranke, making  
 the commandements of God of none effect, by their  
 traditions. *Augustine* could tell them, had they  
 cares to heare wholesome doctrine, that by order is  
 meant a farre other matter, and not luxury of inven-  
 tions tending to confusion, which was never from  
 God; and they might have taken notice how grie-  
 vously he complained of the intolerablenesse of the  
 litter of such burthensome observations, increased  
 beyond all reason within 400. yeeres after Christ,  
 so that the burthen of the Iewes under *Moses*, was  
 lighter then that was then laid on the Church, and  
 yet these unsatiabable tradition-merchants are still la-  
 ding and taking in more, till she is ready to sinke, and  
 will



will be till Christ come in vengeance to surprize their ship, and compell their merchants to breake bulke by force, sinking all as a millstone. *Rev.* 18. But we must leave them, and come unto our selves.

Let us, my brethren, be willing to have our judgments rectified, and euery one of us be exhorted, yea closely held to the observation of this sacred and divine constitution. I must be inforced to an unusuall course of application; setting my bounds, not where strictnesse and propriety of inference, so much as vicinity of dangerous inconvenience some where, and variety of necessary occasions other where will leade me to pitch them; not without some reluctance of mine owne affections sometimes to some persons; though now a right judgement challengeth it's prerogative to reforme and regulate what deafe (yet sincerely devout) affections, (notwithstanding sundry and (in some apprehensions) sharpe intimations, and premonitory cautions) had brought out of square. We have much to looke unto (beloved) in the practise of religion. There are about it three pernicious errors, which we have need to deale against. Two I will but mention, the third stay upon. Let perplexity be censured, so mistaking bee prevented; for this time especially.

1. A *Gallia*-like neglect; Contemptuousnes of the whole businesse of Christianity; when men account it out of their element, out of their jurisdiction, beside the patent of their reasonable imployments. This multitudes will neither directly professe, nor so much as by good consequence cleare them-

themselves of. This appeares in that so many of them are so utterly impatient while we inveigh against *Esa*-like prophanenesse, as if, among all that are guilty, none could be found or ought to be suspected: though the evidence prove they beare no more love to the Gospel and zealous ministers and professors of it then to swine: unlesse such Gadarenites owne speeches and behaviour toward them be much mistaken. This is prophanenesse.

2. A renting asunder of the two tables of the covenant, the one from the other in their conversation and practise: and this is of two sorts. 1. Rejecting the first, and resting in shewes of the second, as, carnall love, pretended truth, peace, iustice, toyle in secular employments, excessive care, and eager incumbency upon their trades and callings, thinking this a sufficiency, if not the highest pitch of religious righteousness; This is the worlds meere civility, if so much. 2. Rejecting the second table, and resting in a professed zeale of the first, desirous not to bee accounted civil onely but religious; and many times are so reputed by others, yea, resolved (through delusion of conscience) in their owne hearts. The Scripture in many places, points them out: especially *Isa. 1.* & *58.* *Zach. 7.* *Mat. 22,* &c. this is next to desperate hypocrisie.

3. In abuse of necessary duties of Religion, tending to the hinderance of it, through ignorance, misunderstanding, and want of experience, and observation. And this may bee in many of Gods children. Yet hence ariseth, that



that *ἀγνοοῦσι* and *ἀταξία* deformity, and confusion, which the necessity of the congregations, and people in this City, more (perhaps) then in some other places inforceth Authority and us to deale against at present.

Therefore I desire you, brethren, suffer the words of a twofold exhortation. You know that. 1. All things that God chargeth us to serve him in, must be done. 2. Then must there be also a *Decorum* and *Method*, or needfull duties will degenerate into unlawfull actions by circumstance. 1. Let all things injoynd by the Lord be done. Let all his ordinances be conscionably frequented. In publicke, publicke ordinances: in private, private ordinances. With the congregation, with the family, in secret. All the holy exercises of the word, preaching, reading, catechising, singing of psalmes, repetition, meditation, conference, Sacraments, prayer, fasting, brotherly admonition, &c. It is not one or two of these that we exhort unto, but all. We have often shewed you the necessity of these, and perswaded to them: not without forewarning of the danger of contempt, yea of neglect of any one of them. I know religious duties begin to come into some account with many: are heartily imbraced by some; professedly disliked of fewe. Yet surely there is a manifest omission and sleighting, if not contempt, of some ordinances, whereunto we must impute the *non proficiency* and powerlesse profession of the Gospel in too many amongst us. God indeed hath promised to blesse every one of his ordinances to his people: but will he not al-

so be severe against the wilfull neglect of any of them? All are appointed for our edification, God working by them all unto salvation. But the casting off the care and use of any one, breakes the chaine of Gods ordination, and proceeding, who hath knit them together in a needfull dependance each on other (where he affordeth them) one furthering the operation and efficacie of the other, so that where all are conscionably frequented, they are very effectuell to edification, where any are left out and some linke of the chaine broken, there is an interruption of the operation and blessing. As in the conveighance of your City water: where one pipe failes and the worke broken off, so that there is not a continuation of all the leads fastened or reaching close each to other, that one may serve another, the water ceaseth it's course, passeth not forward, and so it is not found in the conduit for use. Surely, if we better learned this point (my brethren) and had well gotten the practise of it, Religion would flourish; the fruits, the power, the blessing would abound; and the complaint would not bee so rife or not so iust, that people are one thing in the Church, another at home: pious in the congregation, prophane in conversation: sitting before us hearing our words, but not doing them, as *Ezechiels* hearers: yea hearing many things but understanding them not; as the Lord complaineth by *Esay*, ever learning, and never comming to the knowledge of the truth, as some in the beginning of the Gospel.

This then we exhort you for your owne good, salvation,

Eze. 33. 31.

Isa. 42. 20.

1 Tim. 3. 7.



tion, comfort : make conscience of all, or rest secure in none. Contempt of one will bring a curse upon all. When the law was not publicly read in and before *Iosiahs* time, religion was decayed, <sup>1 Cro. 3. 4.</sup> though they had Prophets sent unto them, and some doubtlesse plyed their priuate devotion. And what was the reason why these Bereans made such a noble progresse in the faith and religion, beyond them of Thessalonica, but because they ioyned the priuate duties with the publike, which others did not. These must not therefore be fundred. In the <sup>Act. 17. 11. 2.</sup> use of the publike in this place we observe your diligence, how it is with you for the private we cannot so well know : but God observeth with what conscience and affection you imbrace both these and them.

For the preaching of the Word among you : As it was at first moved unto me without any thought for this congregation (by some of the most eminent in it, and in the City, in your senate) and by me readily entertained, and (according to my measure) constantly hitherto for this part of the day performed ; so I must beare you witnesse, you have beene with like readinesse and constancy present at the same : attending this soule-saving Ordinance without any observeable affected withdrawals. The other sister-ordinance of catechising, I confesse you have as cheerefully, if not with more alacrity of affection embraced, and subiected your families unto it more reverently and orderly then many other congregations (though yet you see some faylings which I hope you will redresse) and presented

ted your selves also whether it were before or after the beginning of other duties, which gave example to them, encouragement to me, wherein as you have well begun, be not hereafter wanting, as you love your comfort, and desire that the knowledge of God should abound amongst us,

The Sacraments; the one of Baptisme: the greatest part of you give good testimonie how highly you esteeme and reverence it, by your continuance alwayes at the administration of it, assisting by your joynt prayers, contrary to that prophane practise of many turning their backs upon it. The other of the Lords Supper is as generally used (so farre as I can observe) as the Law intendeth it for persons capable; if not by more then are well admittable, whereof, as well as of the too seldome celebration of it you must bee admonished, That there may bee better by preparation, examination and instruction of such as neede it, and a more frequent participation for the greater comfort of your faith; you may doubtlesse enjoy it so often as you will desire with convenience.

Deut. 31. 11,

12, 13.

Neh 8. 3.

Acts. 13. 15.

2 King. 22. 10,

11, 15.

Of the publike reading I need not speake: unlesse I shall exhort you to affoord your most heedfull attention to this plaine and distinct recitation of Gods Law, of farre greater benefit then is by the common vnder-valuers and negligent hearers of it; received. And for the publike prayers of the Church: I cannot but take your seasonable comming together upon these dayes to joyn



in the reverent and solemne celebration of them, a sufficient manifestation of all your judgements, touching the lawfull, yea and necessary use of them. And me thinkes it should be needlesse labour after so long, and generall a practise of this whole Church of England, and all our congregations consenting in the publike leiturgy, to prove unto you that a set forme of prayer, especially in the congregation, is warrantable by the Word of God, and necessary to hold and further the joynt devotions of the people. Besides that: doubting (upon some occasion not unknowne unto you) the danger of the spreading of Anabaptisme in this City, which now through Gods mercy it is as free from as any place, and desiring to direct and encourage the weake and unexperienced Christian to the profitable use of such an helpefull ordinance as God hath vouchsafed to lend them for a furtherance and supply in the dutie of prayer, I largely in another Church handled the same point; and clearing it, answered objections, which I found made against it, applying it for confutation, and gave some plaine and easie familiar rules (as I could thinke upon them) for the advantage and comfort of such as need the use of a set forme in priuate. And lately performed another discourse in this congregation to like purpose, and enough, as I conceive to the meanest, upon the catechisme in the end of it. More we shal in the next commandement which we are now almost come unto: It would also require a iust exercise: & we cannot enter upon it.

ly rest I pray you in a right iudgement, and in a due and peaceable practise of the duty, even as you doe: and breede not a iealousie of your slighting of it to the offence of the Church. Nor let it offend any (a stranger to the uprightnesse of our intentions herein) to heare your deserved praise in that you remember us in these things, and keepe the ordinances, as they have beene delivered unto you according to the word of God. This is spoken of the publike.

Now for the private I have also better warrant to exhort, then to reprove: because I have a clearer light to informe what you ought to doe, then what you neglect. I will instance in the principall.

I. *Prayer in every family.* God forbid that should be verified amongst us in this kinde, which *David* speaketh of the state of all by nature, lying under wrath: That the Lord should looke downe out of heaven into our families and among our people any day to see upon solemne inquisition, if they will seek'e after God, and finde that they call not upon the Lord, but are strangers to this ordinance, which is the manner of Atheists: and let it be, not of Christian families, which should be so many Churches, not meeere civill societies. If the Prophet *Jeremies* divi<sup>n</sup> imprecation be thought upon, how dares any put himselfe and his family forth into the manifold weightie, and dangerous employments of the day, before prayer have beene the key to open, warrant and legitimate the way unto them? yea to open heaven for the getting downe of a blessing upon them? Or with what safety commit we our selves

Psal. 14.

Pacons would  
not have the  
morning and  
evening sa-  
crifice omit-  
ted in the  
house.

Exod. 23.  
Thou shalt  
offer sacrifice  
in the morning  
and in the evening  
before the Lord.  
Leviticus 22.  
Thou shalt offer  
sacrifice in the  
morning and in the  
evening before the  
Lord.



selves to rest, in the midst of all the dangers and  
 terrors of any night, before prayer have beene the  
 locke to shut us in (that we may be as *Noah*, shut  
 in by God himselfe) with the more holy security &  
 Let *Prayer* set the guard of God, his holy Angells  
 and providence about you and yours, and all that  
 you haue, as the hedge or mote, or fence about *Iob*. *Iob 1. 7.*  
 Let not the neglect, and now, after warning, too  
 wilfull neglect of it lay you open to evill, and let  
 in the devill and Gods wrath upon you sleeping.  
 So it be not formall but fervent, and out of consci-  
 ence to Gods ordinance and commandement; it  
 needs not be tedious nor unseasonable. Prove it in  
 earnest, and thou wilt bee so farre from finding a  
 burthen or preiudice, as thou wilt be sure to ac-  
 knowledge it unto thy house (with other religious  
 exercises) as the Arke was to *Obed-Edoms*. And if  
*Dauids* noone-day may conveniently be added, it  
 will bring in blessings heape measure. Especially  
 remember every day the closet, or some place e-  
 quivalent, before thy father who seeth in secret,  
 and will reward thee openly. And this is the  
 first.

2. *Meditation*. It hath a double object, the works  
 of God and the word of God, both with personall  
 application, every one to his owne use. It is a  
 most compleating exercise sucking out the spirits  
 and quintessence of all things. *Meditatio totum*, men  
 were wont to ascribe all unto it, as the digestion of all  
 the soules food for nourishment, strength and com-  
 fort of the inner man. Other exercises of religion  
 are as necessary for the soule, as foode for the bo-  
 dy:

dy. But where there is eager ravenous feeding and no digestion, expect a consumption. Meditation therefore is specially for the Sabbath, it must challenge a part as well as hearing and prayer. It is no day out of season, if the due season be chosen and taken for retired soliloquies. Three necessary and fruitfull exercises, are maine ordinary ministers of wholesome and substantiall nourishment to maintaine the life and strength, and heate of meditation, and they are, repetition, conference, reading.

3. *Repetition* of what is publikely taught, especially by your owne pastors, the foode provided of God for you. You thinke some of us teach too much and too long. If it be so, it is an inconvenience (not to be approved, much lesse continued) and yet an errour on the right hand occasioned sometimes by more love then findes acceptance, though it mostly present it selfe in desired habit trying our acceptance, by pressing upon the curtesie of our entertainment but an ordinary time. Yet Saint Paul seemes to insinuate himselfe into the affections of the people, by an argument taken from what is irkesomenesse and wearinesse to the flesh. *You see how large a letter I have written to you with mine owne hand.* He would have them (I think) consider his great labour. And if any doe manifest the like, sustaining much toyle before in studying, much paines in delivering, and much weakenesse after a sermon, I know no way to ease him, and gratifie your selves like this: carrying away and calling to minde againe in private what is publike-

Ecc. 12. 12.  
Gal. 6. 11.



ly taught. Lesse then (I confesse) with a little of your paines in repetition, would make your burthen lighter, and doe more good. Forgive us that wrong, and doe your selves this right, and we shall be shorter, to encourage you to what ye are bound to doe, yea though any of us should be so irreligious to preach against it. Set your memories on worke, and let them undergoe the best taske that ever God made them for: and helpe your selves by your notes, at least one in a family for the benefit of all the rest. A few short notes, to supply the defects of a short, or slippery memory, yea here and there a word would bring much to remembrance. We should be glad either to inlarge or lessen our paines to further our profit, which we are called to serve in Christ, who entred and inured his disciples to this exercise of repeating apart. It is so necessary that it is hard to reape any benefit oftentimes by the publike without it, as we see by the forgetfulnesse of Christs owne disciples, who could not be guilty of the fault of their forgetfulness in his teaching.

Doe as the Bereans did, examine your proofes, compare the places (as their laudable and successfull practise was) but presse them not beyond our intentions: ministers may expound their owne meaning in repetition, and dilate upon it, as Christ did to the disciples in his repetitions. For private Christians to take so much upon them, is to make new worke, not to repeat the old. It is to teach privately, and not to learne of the publike teacher,

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fo



for private gifts there is another private Ordinance.

4. *Conference.* The two disciples give a good example, *Luk. 24. 14, 15.* this drew Christ to joyne himselfe unto them, and kept him in their company with a great advantage in knowledge, faith, comfort, beyond their expectation, when they begun to conferre betweene themselves about Christs death and sufferings. God doth use to blesse holy conference in necessary, lawfull and orderly meetings: and Christ promiseth to be at such meetings. Communication tending to the increase of wisdom, soundnes of judgement, faith, repentance, mortification, reformation of life, obedience to parents, masters, magistrates, ministers doctrine, touching love, peace, sobriety, equity, mercy, humility, meeknesse, &c. is too little, too seldome on foote. Doe not thinke Authority (by forbidding conventicles, wherein men plot schisme and faction, and opposition to regularity, truth, lawfull government, doctrine of the Church, authority, peace, &c.) ever once meant to countermand the charge of the Almighty to talke of his law, in the house or in the field, and no lesse in the house then upon the way. Therefore let not sinister apprehensions on your parts, blind you so much as to prejudice Authority, your selves, or us in this particular. Know you are neither debarred nor so much as in the least intention discouraged from these good duties, and doing them well, but exhorted and urged thereunto. Who can choose but abhorre that too vulgar prophanenes of mens wits and tongues, and wiles  
not

Mat. 28. 21.

Mat. 18. 20.

Col. 3. 16.

Heb. 10. 24, 25.

Deut. 6. 7.

Qui profanum  
vulgus  
et  
et  
et  
et

not so much bent to shut out all holy conference and spirituall discourse like heresie, as ours should be to shut these persons out of our most intimate familiarity. This is all I intended to speake here of meditation. Now this and the former duty of prayer are assisted and furthered by two other.

5. Reading of the Scriptures, and singing of *Acts*. Psalms. By the one the Eunuch did most successfully spend his time and exercise his heart. He got an extraordinary blessing by a reverent reading of the Text, and referring the exposition thereof (as is meet) unto a guide. Private persons may not presume on the spirit of interpretation; as it came not from private motion at first. From the over- *1 Pet. 1. 10, 11* daring boldnes, and spirit of pride in such rackers of Scriptures given by inspiration of God, hath their private interpretation and strange conceited exposition sprung, no lesse then fanaticall and heretical; that could at last be defended with no pretence but the motion of the holy Ghost. Hence spirits of error haue not a litle troubled the Church, & words and tearms unknown to the Church, have (through the love of their novelty) spread and fretted til eminent members of the Church have been gangren'd and the faith of many been destroyed. Yet private persons may take occasion by the reading of the Scriptures profitably to admonish one another, and remembring may repeate how they have heard the same expounded by the publike minister. With the other of these two duties our Saviour solaced his disciples hearts, and cheared their spirits, and *Paul* and *Silas* their owne, and the Apostle *S. James* *Mat. 26. 30.* *James. 3.*



Eph. 5. 18, 19.  
2 Kin. 3. 15.

directeth us to like use of it, and *Paul* would have it performed in the fulnes of the spirit, unto edification, &c. And the Prophet stirred up the spirit of prophesie in himselfe by a spirituall song with musicke as some understand. I have thus, my good brethren, exhorted you to the performance of all these holy duties in private, for weighty cause; I know what need I have so to doe: and know you, that your forgetting and slighting this charge, will not be the least of your sinnes, if your sinne, seeing ye know these duties, and the bloud of contemners will be upon their owne heads, when we shall be able with comfort to shake our garments from the guilt of it: especially of such as will plead exemption (in male-contented passion) upon wilfull misinterpretation of sincerest intentions, in our next exhortation to the due and inoffensive manner of performance, which I have given some tast and intimations of heretofore, to the distast, and not without the jealousies and censures of some, that should not now have needed a whole (and I must confesse tedious) sermon, to balast them upright if they would have steered by the compasse of the word, or carryed lesse sayle, or not have coasted so neare upon the commanding tide of authority, beside their course and without necessity.

Vpon the Epistle to the Church of Pergamus, Rev. 2,

Acts 17. 21.

2 Peter 2.

I cannot say with *Paul*, ye might have hearke-  
red unto me, and not have put forth and gained  
this harne and losse; because authority is propiti-  
ous; and there is no necessity of receiving any, by  
landing upon an Isthmus or any narrow point, or  
streight betweene the double dashing waves of se-  
verity



verity and rigour; nor yet of casting out our necessary commodities tending to spirituall sustenance and strength, as the ordinances before mentioned. No *Daniel* is forbidden to pray unto his God: nor is any cast out for orderly professing and seeking the knowledge of God, but we are taught, and piously stirred up and called to them both.

Now then to come from the duties themselves Rules to the manner: and leaving so much as concerneth the decency and order of the publike duties in the congregation, to my forementioned insuing opportunity; I proceede with the private which is now specially occasioned and intended. There are some rules to be observed in the performance, that God be not dishonoured, and his name taken in vaine, instead of being worshipped. It cannot be sinne of lowest ranke to turne his owne ordinances to his dishonour: therefore take these few rules. 1. *That holy duties in private be performed seasonably.* Pagans ἡμετέρας ἐκ τῆς did even deifie time; and I here meane by it, both καὶ τῆς ἡμέρας a due time and a fit opportunity or occasion. The καὶ τῆς ἡμέρας time must be fit and suitable to the opportunitie. καὶ τῆς ἡμέρας these are duties of the day and of the light, as the 1 The. 5. 5. persons are, and professe to be that performe them. 6, 7, 8. Let children of darknes and of the night, affect the Rom. 13. 13. night for their workes of darknes, when their actions dare not see the light, as their disposition hath of old been observed: and the most ingenuous Pagans would avoyd the occasion of censures and imputations, that might attend night imployments. Surgunt de nocte Latrones

Blackest aspersions have faile upon purest innocency, from the mouthes of children of darknes,

nes, with deepest staine, though time hath brought their integrity to light againe. But this is a worke of Gods mercifull providence, which our improvidence and rashnes is not excused by. It is true that when men of evill intentions, evill consciences, have measured the servants of God by themselves, as their manner is: or out of a hellish policy, like *Athaliah*, cry treason, faction, wickednes, to divert the taint of it from themselves, and fasten it on them that are furthest from it, they will be found (if they could beday & night observed with *Lynceus* eyes) to bend their utmost endeavours, that they may be in their affections and whole outward conversation (*ἡλικωνεῖς*) so uncorrupt and free from such mixture, staine and blemish of evill, as may not stand with their profession of holines, that they need not be ashamed or affraid to be brought to triall by the clearest sun-shine light of truth, which the Gospel revealeth, according to which we ought to judge of mens estate and wayes. Therefore they also desire to provide for things honest and seemly in the sight of all men, though want of understanding, and of experience in some young and weake Christians led more by affections and example, then by soundnes of judgement (which it is impossible they should in so short time attaine unto a sufficiency of, to guid them exactly in their profession, especially such of them as are more stiffely opinionate, and conceited of their owne abilities then they have cause to be, and most admire the shallowest judgements, and weakest patternes where they find earnestnes of affection) doe mostly  
 looke

Phil. 1. 10.

Rom. 12. 17.



looke forth-right upon a good action, desiring to have no better buckler giuen them to beat back all good counsell, admonition or direction for the manner, then this, that it is necessary, good, or lawfull, and will hardly be perswaded of any necessity to take notice of any circumstance, good or bad, on the right hand or on the left, whereby it comes to passe, that they ordinarily extoll none so much as those that are most uncircumspect, and fayle dangerously together in laying some seeming grounds of falsest aspersions: and this is one of the most usuallest faylings: About the time, It may be much to our purpose to consider that though Christs going up to Ierusalem was of great consequence, The observation of the feast of Tabernacles was commanded, the action good, the oportunity of doing great good by his doctrine and miracles very pregnant; who so devoured with the zeale of his fathers house a- he? his kinsmen importune, hasten him; he telleth them his houre was not yet come, though their's was, he must take his fit opportunity: there was danger of the shew of ostentation on the one side, of the malice of adversaries on the other. He would goe up, and did: not at the beginning, not upon a rash motion, not to the preiudice of the Gospel; the busines was commendable, profitable to the Church: now was the time, yet not the fittest time. His going up and the honour of God, and benefit of his Church furthered thereby, was of more weight then all the concourse and performances besides: yet to say all this, is to say too little, if this one circumstance of *Time* be yet against it.

Ich. 7. 6, 10.

The



The zeale of the Lord of hosts is subjected to meet-  
 nes of time. His love to his fathers glory, his Chur-  
 ches salvation, gives wisdom the prerogative of  
 choosing the opportunity, A wise mans heart discer-  
 neth the time and judgement for every purpose :  
 that is, if there be wisdom in the heart, it will  
 guide him prudently to dispose of his wayes, espe-  
 cially his most importunate actions, in their time.  
 An action as well as a word loseth it's goodnes if it  
 be out of season, out of it's due time. But you de-  
 mand (brethrē) what is the due time of holy duties ?  
 There is a general time, and there is a special time:  
 or thus, there is a common or usuall time; there is  
 also a proper and peculiar time. There is a time for  
 the service of God in generall, both in our callings,  
 and in holy duties : and there is a time of rest and  
 repose and intermission, as the Psalmist sheweth :  
 and the Lord mentioneth the time of holy duties,  
 with the time of rising up and lying downe, when  
 he instanceth in that which he saith in another  
 place should be our meditation day and night. In-  
 deed the desire of our soule should be towards the  
 Lord, and toward the remembrance of his name,  
 even in the night our reynes should chasten us, in  
 the night when we examine our hearts upon our  
 beds : and we should with *David* praise him at  
 midnight ; if we awake, if sleepe depart from our  
 eyes, and God by denying us naturall rest, call us  
 to spirituall meditations : or by some extraordi-  
 nary act of his providence, call us to some extraordi-  
 nary duties. Otherwise for a family, or two or  
 three in it, or sundry persons of severall families,

Ecc 8. 3, 6.

Psalm 104. 23.

Deut. 6. 7.

Isay 26. 8.

to neglect the day, or for every pretence of day-lets, or want of opportunities, to put themselves, without necessity upon the sad and suspected night for such duties, how farre it is from decency and order, let the course of nature which God hath stablished, the inconveniences that follow it and may follow, and the judgement of all the godly wise, and that are not led by will and humour, and the experience of all that know what life and quicknes and cheerefulnes in holy duties, is: and what is to be surprized with the contrary in the night, and how unprofitable such drowsie dreaming performances are, yeeld us impartiall information. The imputations also that were layd upon primitive Christians for their night meetings (not private but for Church assemblies) such as they could have, being necessitated by most bloody persecutions of Roman tyrants, should make any Christians thinke what is like to be belched out against religion and professors of it, for needles night watchings and night walking to such purposes in these peaceable times, and for religions sake by such as hate both it and them that most zealously practise it. What excuse admits that sinne of putting into the blacke mouths of hereticks, Atheists, Papists, bitter enemies so specious a pretence to blaspheme the good way, the more to harden their owne hearts against it, when our principall care should be to stop their mouthes by following these things that are amiable and of good report to win them.

There is through Gods mercy no iust cause of laying any crime to the charge of any that delight in these good duties in this City: and what is more desired then that there may never be to which end these things are spoken, as cautions onely.

2. And for more speciall opportunitie in the day, and seasonablenes for such things, wisdome and

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experi-



experience will leade men to it. Opportunity is, when it may be performed (if by one) most secretly, silently, with best affections, most safety, comfort, fruit, with least hinderance to our calling, &c. (if by more) by all that should performe it together or the most (when all cannot joyne) without disturbance, distraction, annoyance, inconvenience, sleepines, hinderance of importnat affaires in our callings, prejudice to our selves, masters, parents, governours, who have time given them of God to imploy themselves and theirs in that which they have to doe about the things of this life, for their and our maintenance and the publike good. In which time it is not lawfull for any to withdraw themselves and their service and attendance from them, without their leave, upon the six dayes wherein they have the dispensation of time committed unto them. They ought wisely and religiously to steward it for the meet seasons of serving God in the dayly duties of his priuate worship that all may be sanctified unto them, as well as for their secular imployments, wherein the Lord is also served for the common good, and their owne livelihood, in their places and callings. If they allow not what they ought, it is their sinne, inferiours may not therefore set apart what time they list, to their prejudice. God wil not regard stollen service, no more then we should stollen bread, and stollen waters. It is not so savoury to him, as these too oft to us: he will never accept that time for his worship which he hath manifestly given your parents and masters, and they need, for their callings and due



due occasions. Though it be their sinne to neglect holy duties in their owne families; none may therefore shake off the yoke, and inordinately fly abroad without necessity, and so make themselves guilty of a sinne as great. If they rob God, thou mayest not therefore rob them: and usurpe liberty unlawfully against all good reason and their consent. The Lord hath no need of spoyles. Beware of *Adams* full trick of eating forbidden fruit: take that which is allowed, till thou be better advised.

A second rule is this, that (as the publike) so Rule 2. private holy duties be performed in meet places; otherwise they may receive three blemishes. The first, a shew of superstition, if any place be chosen for them, as more holy in it selfe then any other.

2. A shew of ostentation and vaine-glory, and hypocrisie, if such places be affected as may make the exercises and performers, and partakers of the same more noted and observed, then another place which might as well be chosen: as Pharises in the Mat. 6. 5. Synagogues, street corners, and market-places, and that standing too, that they might be seene or heard the more. 3. A colour or apparance of consciousness of some worke of darknes (though none be so much as thought on) if in a place too secret (when by more then one) as if they or their actions were subject to some just taxe of exorbitancie. To secure against all these, I conceive that place most usually taken up (unles it be for one alone, or more of a sex in the same family, opportunely sequestering themselves for private devotion) for the morning and evening sacrifice and family duties, is most

Ioh. 3. 19, 20.  
21.  
Eph. 5. 12.

expedient. Especially that house or roome that hath least shew of projected retyrednes out of a just feare through conscioufnes of evill. Least that be misapplied and uniuftly charged upon children of the light, which belongeth rather to children of this world, who are most apt to traduce and flatter their most holy and most harmelesse intentions.

Rule 3.

3. That holy duties be performed in lawful meetings, by fit persons; and that both for number and quality. 1. For number, we must not take these for private exercises, performed by so many together. *Act. 1. 15. and cap. 20. 7, &c.* They were the Church assemblies in time of cruell persecutions: and therefore the time and place were also extraordinary, for it is not meet that Christians should now troope together for midnight duties, or in so great assemblies by day in a private place, for that makes it exceede the bounds, and looseth the nature of a private meeting, intrenching upon the borders of a publike congregation, and the duties become publike, though not of a whole congregation; and such a meeting, for such performances would carry the face of a separation, and of another Church, to the dangerous prejudice and conceived censure of that, out of which it issues.

2. For quality in sundry respects, especially of gifts, age, place, and calling, and such like relations. The agents must be fit for such worthy performances in such presence: and their gifts must be answerable to these high undertakings before God, his Sonne, his Angels, his Saints; and in these



these gifts, sufficiency, gravity, sobriety, reverence, &c. must be respected. Every babe is not fit to be the mouth of so many other. They must not intrude themselves, nor be set up (much lesse urged) to perform holy duties in the sight of the Lord & before his people that want competent abilities; To take Gods name in vaine, and make dreadfull ordinances ridiculous and contemptible; Nor is it enough to say, come abroad and performe; increase your gifts; as in an *EXERCISE*; where you may be tryed, censured: because prayer, thanksgiving, confession, duties of humiliation are ordinances of God for devotion, not exercise, as in a Schole or Vniversitie, this must be done first in secret; and then must follow hearing and joyning with others, in silence. Besides, what great benefit of their mutuall censure where the highest priviledge is to be judged by their Peeres, and there is not any that ought to take upon him to be a judge of what is solid, orthodoxe, and according to the Word of God; but all may and doe erre together, often, and easily in such cases; and perhaps dislike that which is most sound and consonant to divine truth; and hence may and sometimes have heterodoxe, exoticall and strange uncouth opinions, absurdities, practises, sprung up: yea rootes of bitternes in the Churches, long before publike notice, and grown past all capability of controll, laughing our pulpit doctrine to scorne before our faces, Neither doth this remedy and justifie all, that some such *Jonathan* or wandering Levite as hath crotchets and tenents tending to novelty, may be gottē in by stealth



Num. 30. 13.

1 Cor. 7. 5.

and made master of the assembly, but much the worse and leading to further refractarines, and corruption: so farre is it from being a *superseedeas* against innovation and corruption, and lawfull exception against the inconveniences of such a course. Schisme and faction hath most often been warmed in and sprung out of the charitable simplicity of their good and well intended devotions, that have not beene aware, nor well able to judge an others (and sometimes a conceited ministers) pride, singularity, ignorance. As for their place and callings, and relations to superiors, I shall not need to speak much, if that be well considered, which is spoken of the husbands disanulling the wifes vowe and promise to God for spending time in fasting and humiliation, one of the weightiest, and sometimes most necessary and profitable amongst private duties. A worke of the best is performeable by such as have power, and under the power of such as have immediate lawfull authority, with generall or particular, implied or exprest consent, and none otherwise. (I speake of private duties wherein so much time is spent from their callings upon the weeke dayes, as upon the Saboth from the family, as requireth their dispensation by vertue of their place and calling.) Children and servants, may not so farre resemble children of *Belial*, (that will reject every yoke at pleasure) as to deale so unjustly and dishonorably with those whose they are, and who have interest in them. to rent themselves from the head and body domesticall, whereof they are members, no not by a secret and insensible violence

lence to cast off duty and service at their own will, as if it were enough to say *CORBAN*, 'tis given to God, 'tis time bestowed, service performed, a more religious way. I know (that which is to be bewayled) some masters and parentt are not so well skilled, as to direct those that are under them in a religious cause. And surely one maine cause of the unmeet and forbidden meetings of good and well affected soules, which I am sure need these our directions, is this, they doe not delight in such duties in their families themselves, nor appoint, command, & allow them in their houses so often & so much as they should. For there they haue power, may be bold, yea are bound to do it in what measure they are able, with cheerefulnes reverence, and authority. The word, the Church of God, and all authority in it, encourageth thereunto: and the neglect is a very great fault, and one maine reason, why religion and the knowledge of it, is so hardly wrought in those of such private families by the publike ministry. Yet, I say, we must not therefore be every one a master, a commander, and order direct and meet at pleasure. Too many usurping the commanders liberty, lost *Halicarnassus*, the chiefe city of Caria, and the whole country with it, so that it grew into a proverb, appliable in such cases. And indeed where every one is a captaine, a master, a ruler, there is no order; all falls into a confusion, and Anabaptisticall anarchy.

The fourth rule for private duties is: That they be performed as may best stand with charity? and the more common good, peace, and safety of the Church

Rule 4.



1 Cor. 13.

Church we live in. And here a double charity is to be respected. 1. Our owne, towards others voyd of envy, emulation, pride, swelling, contempt, disgrace; what proceedes not from charity, is to our selves unprofitable (that I say not unchristian) how like soever Christian duties. It is almost incredible, what uncharitablenes may be bewrayed in selfe-conceited rashnes of novices, yong plants, as suddenly sprung up as mushrooms, yet in such meetings as bold as doctors of the chayre, stating the doctrines of publike ministers, censuring their gifts, at least by comparison (as if they could judge and determine such things with ease) and according to the verdict (affection it is) of these low-forme Critickes must runne the generall censures of ministers, professions, families, extolled by all superlatives utterable, or decyed below all charitable hopes of them for present; almost adored, or almost to be abhorred: very holy, or very graceles is the doome: and who knowes how neare home the worst part of it may sometimes fall (I hope farre better things of you) my deare brethren, and devoutly affected Christians (strange uncharitablenes (I say) may breake out in such arrogant censures, if all things be not done in love. 2. The charity of others also must be respected, that it be not wounded and provoked against our selves, by our indiscreete menaging of religious duties with some appearance of evil, mingling that which is unlawfull, with that which is lawfull, and how (may some say) how can this stand together with sinceritie? evill affection, evill meanes, evill aymes, evill effects,

1 Cor. 16. 14.



fects, events at least, though by accident occasioned by our saylings in the manner of doing what is in it selfe good. Let us remember the Apostles words in another case, touching what was lawfull, but by accident offensive, that is, which made others to offend and stumble: *Now walkest thou not charitably.* And surely such as well consider the precious use of love and peace, and how religion prospereth by peace and rest, and the Church injoying them increaseth by them, will never seeke it by their contraries, on the one side exasperating authority; on the other side, setting the Egyptian dogs a barking without any necessity; But if it shall be objected; that Hereticks, Papists, Atheists and persons of an implacable and curious pragmaticall disposition, malecontented headlong bayards will be bawling against good performances, without cause; I answer, They will, too fast, out of their owne private enmity; yea though they sleep, they will manifest the habit by grumbling and imperfect whapping. It is therefore the greater folly to awake and stirre them without necessity; and then complaine of our hurt, to the trouble of our Governours, who will find iust cause to lay no small blame upon ourselves. Hearken my deare children, 1. It is not necessary private duties should be performed with so much noyse; There is a silent secrecy, which God will accept thy devotions in, according to thy measure, at home and apart, rather then bury them of thee with the losse of any part of his owne glory, which cloudy tumultuousnes (rayfed through thy indiscretion) may much  

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eclipse,

eclipse, deface. 2, Thou hast liberty for the publike duties, and helpe too, even to admiration, if not farre beyond thy thankfulnes and contentation. 3. None is debarred or inhibited the meete, profitable, frequent use of the private. 4. I presume to hold this (as yet) for a truth, and a godly rule beyond exception, vnlesse it be of a very ignorant person: *That our personall comforts and advantages ought (by the rule of charity) even in grace and spirituall things in part, and in some degree to be parted withall, in love to others, and for the more publike good, & more generall freedome and peace of the Church, whereby the Church hath it's passage for the edification and salvation of many.* Else, where is that affection, that charitable spirit that breathed forth so strongly towards the Church in *Moses* and *Paul*, striving after this affection, and preferring ones priuate concernements, contentments, comforts before the publike good, cannot stand together.

Esa. 3:32.  
Rom. 3:9.

Rule 5.

5. So to performe religious duties as may stand with the faithfull and due discharge of the duties of our callings. All will grant (I thinke) it must be as Gods glory may be most advanced; and that is in the most generall good. Hearken then, By holy ordinances in publike we get knowledge, faith, hope, charity, humility, mercy, iustice, obedience: by private duties we further and increase all these with much delight and present comfort. But all must be enjoyed in common in the hive. We doe not gather all this hony for our selves alone to make inclosure of it: but to manifest and set all on worke, for the advancement of the common good, and so we come neere the soveraigne



raigne good, who is therefore knowne to be so, because he diffuseth and communicateth his goodnes to all. Now we have none other orbe to moove in, while we send forth this influence, but our particular place, calling, imployment in Church and Common-weale. There's great ods betweene private edification and the publike good. This is our chiefeſt aime, and the end of all our use of Gods ordinances: and the other is subordinate to this and for this. That for which any thing is, must not be neglected and slighted for that which is for it. And nothing is good and well, but as it serveth, and is subordinate to that for which it is. This is true in all ordinances, actions, arts, course of nature, oeconomy, policy. The spirituall hidden Manna of grace we gather by prayer, meditation, sacraments, &c. is to be unto us as the food brought to *Eliab* by the Angel, in the strength and comfort whereof we must painfully and faithfully travell in our callings with love and righteousness which must therein especially shew it selfe. Our calling is as it were the center into which all the lines are equally directed from the circumference of all our deuotions: Instance in this one particular of our preaching and your hearing. What is the end of all? that every one have his portion seasonably, and learne to be good in his calling, by shewing the fruit of all therein. Magistrates, ministers, husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, merchants, labourers, &c. And when our preaching comes home to this closely, you will say 'tis best: and so indeed is this dayes doctrine, because it bendeth so much this way. And indeed *S. Paul* in almost all his epi-



files (at least *Rom. Gal. Eph. Col. Tim. Tit. &c.*) shutteth up all that he teacheth touching knowledge, faith, regeneration, and our generall vocation, and ends it in that wherein men and women should shew the power of all their particular callings. Take away the magistrate, minister, the husband, wife, children, servants, I meane their faithfulnessse in their callings, and you take away religion: because without these, house-keeping, family, trades, Church, common wealth fall; and then where's religion? Take away the masters providence: the mistresses subjection to her husband, and care for him, children, servants, &c. that she doe little or nothing but religious duties, and leave the family at randome; by that example breeding children and servants to walke in the same steps, not acquainted with labour and good house-wifery.

Give servants what liberty they will take or covenant for, to be at every sermon, every repetition, every meeting, every conference they will; and let them be received from house to house, from service to service, as often as they list change for such like ends, and for more liberty to rove and range: or be suffered to live in a masterles manner, as sojourners, under a pretence they worke for themselves, and so being onely in their owne power, can give themselves to prayer and conference and meetings, I say grant this generally, and stop the ship from the voyage, forbear or forbid the market, call home the factor, draw home the stocke, shut up the shop-windowes, dissolve the family, and away. We may resolve to give them a meeting in new England shortly,

shortly, for the old cannot subsist, cannot sustaine it selfe and us. I say, suppose this generall (for if it be necessary why should not all do so) trades and husbandry it selfe, by which God saith the King is maintained, will fall, and the kingdome after it. It is a weake objection, that *Mary* had chosen the good part, when it was so seldome she could enjoy it, as the state of that Church was, and if there were any comparifon intended against *Martha's* imployment, it was not to condemne housewifery, but her neglect of a rare opportunity, while she did care and trouble her selfe too much about this service, and that for outward feasting, which Christ expected not; and the Apostle tells us that idlenesse is theft in the fruit and effects of it, and he that worketh with his hands doth that which is good too; and much good comes of it, and therefore giveth so often and serious charge against inordinatenes and irregularity. It is lesse, against what hath bin now said, that wee must redeeme time, seeing the answer is to be had from the very scope of that place, we touched but now, provided it be not to the overthrow of labour, and so of the Church: and in the same place, not as fooles but as wise: is there no redeeming of time, but by unfaithfulness in our callings, this will be an easie redemption for a little time, but at last many must pay for it. There is dangerous separating of that which God hath joyned. It will prove unwise, purchasing the one with the preiudice of the other, and to the offence of aliens, hindring them from comming to our Religion for idlenes sake. The sum therfore is.

Eph. 4. 28.

Eph. 5. 15, 16.

1 Th. 4. 1, 12.